

Dr. Thomas C. Quinn Transcript

Thomas C. Quinn, M.D.



Few researchers were as prepared to study the AIDS epidemic as Dr. Thomas Quinn was. After conducting research on malaria for several years at the NIH, he moved to Seattle in 1979 for clinical training in sexually transmitted diseases and spent two years investigating the gastrointestinal infections of gay men.

Little did he realize at the time that he had been uniquely trained to study what would become one of the most devastating disease in history. As a person who had just completed immunology and laboratory training in tropical diseases, and who was an expert in sexually transmitted diseases among gay men, he recalls, "I was poised, ready for AIDS," both in the United States and in tropical countries such as in Africa.

Dr. Quinn moved to Baltimore in 1981 and soon became an NIH intramural scientist stationed at the Johns Hopkins University, where he began to study AIDS and to train other NIH clinicians. He was one of the first physicians in the mid-Atlantic region to treat AIDS patients.

A key player in learning how the disease spread and who was at risk, he was part of the small team of scientists invited to Haiti to advise local authorities on the mysterious new disease. In 1983, Dr. Quinn followed the Haiti trip with a visit to Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of Congo. There he and colleagues formed

Projet SIDA, a research program designed to study AIDS in Africa. The project provided the first comprehensive descriptions of the AIDS epidemic on the continent and proved to be a vital resource for scientists seeking to understand and contain the disease in Africa and around the world.

Dr. Quinn later helped establish more key studies in Africa, Asia, and South America, continually producing much-needed information on how AIDS spreads among different peoples. He continues to work for the NIH out of his laboratory at the Johns Hopkins University, with his eyes focused on the international AIDS toll and on finding new ways to prevent the devastation caused by HIV infection.

Transcript of Interview:

Dr. Thomas Quinn, M.D., Dec. 5 & 16, 1996

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